

# Fatality Narrative

## Sider Falls from Failed Pump Jack Scaffolding\*

**Industry:** Residential construction  
**Occupation:** Sider  
**Task:** Siding gable section of apartment building  
**Type of Incident:** Fall from scaffolding

**Release Date:** June 30, 2004  
**Case No.:** 03WA078  
**SHARP Report No.:** 71-20-2004

On December 22, 2003, a sider was putting siding on an apartment building when the pump jack scaffolding on which he was standing failed and he fell 27 feet to an asphalt driveway. The 31-year-old sider, employed by a residential construction contractor, was putting siding on a gable section of an apartment building. He was working from a scaffold plank 27 feet above the ground when the pump jack scaffolding system started to collapse. The brace securing one of the two pump jack poles malfunctioned and opened. He grabbed the roof section of the gable as the scaffolding collapsed but was unable to hold on and fell to an asphalt driveway below. He was taken by ambulance to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead. The victim was not using fall protection. He was an experienced sider who had worked with his current employer for seven months. An investigation determined that the pump jack scaffolding was not properly erected. The poles were not plumb, they were erected too far from the face of the building, and they were only secured to the building at the top.

### Requirements/Recommendations

(! Indicates items required by rule)

- ! Scaffolding must be erected under the direction of a competent person.
- ! Manufacturer's instructions must be followed when erecting scaffolding.
- ! Pump jack scaffold poles must be attached to the structure by rigid triangular bracing or the equivalent at the top, the bottom, and other points as necessary.
- ! Appropriate guardrails must be in place on all open sides of the pump jack scaffolds or employees must use personnel fall arrest systems.
- ! Pump jack poles must be set plumb and be secured to maintain the stability and strength of the scaffold to prevent pole failure.
- Copies of the design drawings for the pump jack scaffold and manufacturer's instructions should be kept at the construction site.
- Employers should develop and use a site-specific fall protection work plan.

**State Wide Statistics:** This was the 74<sup>th</sup> out of 74 work-related fatalities in Washington State during the year 2003 and was the 5<sup>th</sup> fatal fall from elevation in construction of the year.

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*This bulletin was developed at the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries to alert employers and employees in a timely manner of a tragic loss of life of a worker in Washington State. We encourage you to consider the above information as you make safety decisions for or recommendations to your company or constituency. The information in this notice is based on preliminary data ONLY and does not represent final determinations regarding the nature of the incident or conclusions regarding the cause of the fatality.*

Developed by the Washington State Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) and Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) Programs at the WA State Dept. of Labor & Industries. For more information, contact the Safety and Health Assessment and Research for Prevention (SHARP) Program, 1-888-667-4277, <http://www.lni.wa.gov/safety/research/face>.